Theol Semy. Febry 17th 1846-

Dear Brethren,

Your last Communication was duly reciev'd, and we reply. We should consider it a privilege of no ordinary kind, to be permitted to interchange our thoughts and sentiments, and extend to each other our mutual sympathies - we who are engaged in the same pursuits, and who have the same object in view. If any Class of men, united together for any specific purpose, find it necessary to consult and advise, it is certainly that of Ministers, and those who are looking forward to that station; for they, of all others have the most arduous undertaking to perform; - And while we readily acknowledge that "it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God" - that our end is to be finally consummated, yet, as the Great Head of the Church has been pleased to appoint human instrumentality in bringing it about, we, acting in this capacity are required to use our efforts with as much assiduity, as if the work depended wholly upon ourselves. This being so, who need more counsel and more encouragement in the prosecution of their labor than those who are engaged in pulling down the strongholds of Satan, and establishing the kingdom of God upon its ruins! We are separated, though we are one. We are of the same family; branches of the same vine, nourished and sustaind by the same spiritual food; - we have the same task to perform, Comforted by the same hopes,– sustained and strengthened by the same promises, and have the same home in view– such being the case, it is right and proper that we hear from each at frequent intervals.

We have not much of any special interest to communicate, though will briefly notice the several interrogatories contained in your letter. The number of students in the Seminary, the present session is small, as it has commonly been since its commencement;– though we think the prospects ahead for the Seminy are somewhat flattering. There is an attempt now being made to endow another professorship, and there is but little doubt of its succeeding. If this is effected, we have no doubt but that our institution will grow. We look upon this also as foreboding good to the church at large, what will be the issue, the developements of the future will only make known.

The foreign Mission Spirit, we have to lament, is at a low ebb among us at this time, none we believe are looking forward at present to that field. The subject of domestic Missions seems to claim more of our attention at present, and not only of us who are in the Seminy, but of the whole Southern Church; several of the previous class are engaged in that field within our own State– while the greater part that have graduated here for the last few years are gone to fill up the destitute portions of the west.

The subject of religious instruction among the negroes, has awakened universal attention, not only among Christians, but also among non-professors. Many of our southern planters who own a number of slaves, are erecting Churches on their plantations for the special benefit of their slaves— While they are supplied with preaching from the different sects of christians. Our Presbyterian Missions are paying a due regard to the subject, & seeing that every opening is supplied with a Minister, and some of the members of this place, are now in that field.

You wish to know how some of the prominent acts of the last G. Assembly were received among us.— As regards the question of Slavery which was brought forward, and settled, we of course were ~~especially~~ pleased to see it so amicably adjusted by that body. and we trust that the subject will not soon be agitated by our church judicatories, at least in our branch of the Church, so as to engender any unpleasant feelings between the North & South— and which may finally end in a rupture, as among some other sects of Christians.

The decision of the question concerning "Romish Baptism" did meet our most hearty concurrence, and of course we differ *toto Coelo* from the sentiments of the "*Princeton Review* of last July. Roman Catholicism in its broadest extent, demands the notice of the whole Protestant world, in a particular manner at the present time. And any thing that would give the least encouragement to its propagation sho: be repudiated with the greatest unanimity by all christians who believe that the essence of true religion consists in a thorough reformation of *heart*. The church of Rome we consider to be a mass of corruption, her clergy we believe to be libidinous— flagitious— men of the basest character, instead of pointing souls to the Heavenly Jerusalem, are leaving them deluded to an endless hell! While the whole body of the church, whatever may be their theological tenets, are relying for their hopes of final salvation, upon some other foundation than *Christ*.

It may be said that some of the elect of God are incorporated in that society — the same thing might be said of a band of prostitutes, and with almost as much plausibility! And though they profess to teach some of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, yet what they actually do, is very different. We cannot therefore believe that such a society has any authority from the Great Head of the Church to perform those sacred ordinances which he has established, and hence not valid.

It is though a privilege which every one has a right to enjoy his own opinion respecting such matters, yet we think it a matter of some importance, to all of us who are ambassadors for Christ, to see well upon what grounds, we rest our opinions when such tremendous consequences are at stake.

Brethren, we are glad to hear from You at any time,

Believe us to be affectionately Yours in Christ

In behalf of the Society —

Yours &c

William W. Wilson